

County Commissions



Functional Analysis & Records Disposition Authority

**Revision
Approved by
the Local Government
Records Commission
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Functional and Organizational Analysis of County Commissions

Sources of Information

- Representatives of Alabama County Commissions
- Alabama Administrative Code
- Alabama Department of Environmental Management
- *Alabama Government Manual* (1998)
- Association of County Commissions of Alabama
- Code of Alabama 1975
- Martin, David. *Alabama's State and Local Governments* (1988)
- McCurley, Robert L., Jr. *Handbook for Alabama County Commissioners* (1997)

Historical Context

Counties are political subdivisions of our state, organized to assist in the local administration of state functions. Historically, they evolved from the form of local government established in England before the Norman Conquest of 1066. Counties were first established in the American colonies during the 17th century and were especially important in the southern colonies. There are more than three thousand counties now in the United States.

Washington County was the first Alabama county, created in 1800, or two years after the territory now forming the states of Alabama and Mississippi was organized into the Mississippi Territory. The territorial legislature (first of the Mississippi Territory and, after 1817, of the Alabama Territory) created additional counties as the area was settled. By the time Alabama entered the Union in December 1819, 29 counties had been organized. The legislature continued to establish counties as the need arose, primarily in the 1830's and 1860's, so that the entire territory of the state was organized into 66 counties by the time the current Constitution was adopted in 1901. Presently, there are 67 counties in the State of Alabama.

The first local government system in Alabama was the county court system. In 1821, this system was changed to increase the number of justices, which led to the establishment of a new court, the Court of County Commissioners. This arrangement provided for a certain amount of separation between the administrative and judicial functions of government at the county level. The new commissioners were assigned administrative and legislative functions, such as control over roads, ferries, and bridges and the management of public buildings. In 1866, additional responsibilities were added to include governing local election administration, licensing, and record-keeping. Formerly, counties operated under a system of district road commissioners, each of whom had his own road crew. Only thirteen Alabama counties still retain this system; elsewhere, a county engineer has generally assumed the duties of the road commission. To this day, however, the state legislature continues to control county government activities, as matters apparently of purely local importance must often be submitted for legislative action in the form of local bills and local constitutional amendments.

Agency Organization

For many purposes (such as allocating funds), the county commission is the governing body of the county. The commission consists of three to nine members and may include the probate judge. The commissioners are elected and serve a four-year term, as prescribed in the Code of Alabama 1975 § 11-3-1. However, the same section provides that local laws may change their tenure to some other term of years. The Code of Alabama 1975 § 12-13-30 authorizes the probate judge to serve a six-year term. The probate judge is elected by the county at large, but a more restricted form of residence applies to most commissioners. Normally, counties are divided into districts, and a commissioner is elected in each district. In a few counties, commissioners may be elected on a county-wide basis, without regard to residence. If the probate judge does not serve as chairperson of the commission, the chairperson may be elected on a county-wide basis or selected by the commissioners themselves. Commission members can only be removed by impeachment proceedings held in the county's circuit court. To qualify for the office of county commissioner, an individual must be a resident of the county or district he or she would represent and a qualified elector of the county. Commissioners must file a bond (made by a surety or guaranty company authorized by law to conduct business in the state) and take an official oath of office. They cannot hold another office while serving as commissioner.

County commissioners are charged with many responsibilities. In order to address the needs of the county, most county commissions employ an individual usually referred to as the county administrator. The administrator generally manages the county's day-to-day business. Since the commissioners may not be present during day-to-day operations, they rely heavily on the administrator to keep them informed by maintaining a close working relationship. County administrators are primarily financial managers. Their duties include: preparing budgets, supervising financial record-keeping, monitoring revenues and expenditures, making investments, and preparing financial reports. The county administrator also monitors the results of state and federal legislation that affects the county, working with the county attorney to stay informed of the courts' and Attorney General's interpretations of legislation affecting county operations. In order for the commission to operate smoothly, the administrator hires personnel and assigns job responsibilities.

Agency Function and Subfunctions

The Code of Alabama 1975 § 11-3-10 and 11-3-11 establishes many of the powers and duties of county commissions. Additional authority for county commission actions is found elsewhere in Title 11 and, indeed, throughout the Code. The mandated function of the commission is to direct, control, and maintain the property of the county as it may deem expedient according to the law. The county commission determines where the courthouse(s) will be in each county and designates the location of each official's office. The commission oversees the establishment of new roads and bridges, and makes changes to existing roads or bridges, in order to improve travel throughout the county. The commission levies taxes; examines and settles claims against the county; audits accounts of all county officers having care, management, or disbursement of county funds; and contracts for county services. Generally, the county commissions' duties fall under the Policy & Statute Development, Public Services, Economic & Community

Development, Regulation, and Administrative Support Operations functions of Alabama government as described in the “Functional Analysis of Alabama Government.”

In the performance of their authorized or mandated functions, the County Commissions may engage in the following subfunctions:

- **Making and Implementing Policy.** The county commission establishes policy for the county by adopting resolutions that embody policy decisions. Resolutions are adopted during the commission’s regular meetings. The public may attend those meetings and contribute ideas and opinions that may influence the commission’s decisions. Special meetings may be called by the commission when special issues or needs arise. Public hearings may be held at this time. Policy decisions by the commission are made in accordance with state and federal regulations.
- **Authorizing Revenue Collection and Collecting Revenue.** Counties are delegated limited powers of taxation by the state. The commission levies taxes authorized by the state constitution or by local and general acts of the legislature. Property taxes continue to be a major source of county revenue; but the county also receives a portion of its revenue from other sources, such as the business license tax, gasoline tax, automobile license tax, corporate franchise tax, privilege licenses, occupational tax, sales tax, alcoholic beverage tax, severance tax, TVA distribution, mineral documentary tax, and fees for services. At its discretion, the commission allocates percentages of taxes and fees collected to fund various county functions. The assessment and collection of taxes is, of course, the responsibility of the county tax assessor and tax collector, or of a revenue commissioner in counties wherein the offices have been combined. However, in some counties, such as Montgomery County, the county’s sales tax office is separate from the county taxation office. In these counties, the county commission is responsible for the records of the county taxation office.
- **Facilitating Elections.** Under Title 17, Chapter 5A of the Code of Alabama 1975, each county commission is responsible for establishing and defining the boundaries of electoral precincts, voting districts, and polling places for the county. Along with the county board of registrars, it coordinates with the state reapportionment task force and supplies information to the U.S. Census Bureau in order to ensure that the county’s electoral precincts and districts remain equitable. The county commission also purchases voting machines, maintains them, and pays the costs of individual elections.
- **Providing Utility and Sanitation Services.** The commission provides for citizens of the county to receive various utility and sanitation services, either by establishing a county department to administer the service or by contracting with private vendors. The commission also directs the acquisition of water, sewer, and sanitation services for county property and residents of the county.
- **Building and Maintaining Roads and Bridges.** The commission provides for building roads and bridges throughout the county. Most counties maintain road

departments that usually employ a sizeable number of people to build and maintain roads and bridges. The commission may also contract for portions of this service (such as spreading asphalt). The commission monitors roads and bridge improvement projects to continue making travel safe for all citizens. The commission controls travel safety by posting speed limits on streets and highways that fall under its jurisdiction.

- **Providing Public Transportation Systems and Facilities.** This subfunction pertains to the operation and maintenance of airports, public transit systems, and other public transportation services or facilities that some counties provide to citizens. (Other counties support municipal or regional entities that provide such services.) The operation of some facilities, such as airports, may be subject to state and federal requirements and administered by autonomous authorities.
- **Providing Senior Services.** Counties may provide services to their senior citizens, either in cooperation with area councils on aging or independently. Such services (sometimes conducted through local non-profit agencies, volunteers, or vendors) may include: operating senior centers that provide meals, health and welfare programs, and recreational and social opportunities; providing transportation services; supporting senior citizen discount programs; providing counseling, case work, referrals, and other social services; offering home health care through the Medicaid Waiver Program; providing in-home services, such as house cleaning and escorted shopping; employing federal funds to provide job or volunteer opportunities; and investigating complaints about residential health care facilities.
- **Planning and Improving Community Development/Recruiting Business and Industry.** Most county commissions participate in the planning function through a regional planning commission, under statutes authorizing the county commission to develop a master plan for the county's physical development (Code of Alabama 1975 § 11-85-1 through 11-85-7). The Code of Alabama 1975 § 11-81-140 through 11-81-150 authorizes the commission to issue public improvement revenue bonds for county improvements. The types of improvement undertaken may include building or improving parks, airports, docks, hospitals, public markets, tennis courts, swimming pools, golf courses, agricultural facilities, etc.

The object of this subfunction is to attract new business ventures to the county. County governments may cooperate with regional planning commissions, municipalities, and non-government agencies such as chambers of commerce and tourism councils, in promoting county resources to potential businesses and residents. Counties may operate civic centers and industrial parks as sites to attract business conferences and industrial development.

- **Zoning and Regulating Subdivisions.** As a general rule, Alabama counties do not possess the comprehensive planning and zoning authority necessary to control the development and use of territory lying outside the boundaries of incorporated municipalities. However, there are provisions of law under which particular aspects of the

physical development of non-municipal territory may be planned and controlled to a significant degree. Each county governing body is authorized to adopt a comprehensive land management and use program for flood-prone areas and to regulate subdivisions in the county lying outside the corporate limits of municipalities. (See the Code of Alabama 1975, Title 11, Chapter 24.)

- **Licensing/Permitting and Inspecting.** The commission issues licenses and permits to regulate some activities conducted within the county's jurisdiction. The commission regulates such county services and facilities as building and housing construction, code enforcement, utilities (gas, water, sewer), health and sanitation, fire prevention, and recreational facilities. A few counties employ license commissioners to issue licenses and permits for the commission and collect the associated fees. Inspections are conducted by county license inspectors responsible for enforcing codes and regulations.
- **Vaccinating and Controlling Domestic Animals.** Under the Code of Alabama 1975 § 3-7A-7, "it shall be the duty of each and every county in the state to provide a suitable county pound and impounding officer for the impoundment of dogs and cats found running loose in violation of the provisions of this chapter." The Code of Alabama 1975 § 3-7A-2 requires "every owner of a dog or cat" to have the animal immunized against rabies by the county's rabies control officers or a "duly licensed veterinarian." Besides providing immunizations, counties may maintain a "dog pound" and mobile animal control units to pick up stray animals and, eventually, destroy those not claimed.
- **Managing Emergencies.** The Law Enforcement and Emergency Powers function of Alabama local government encompasses all objectives that pertain to ensuring public safety. Those having to do with law enforcement, fire protection, emergency communications, and emergency medical services are documented in other RDAs. This subfunction covers activities involved in responding to and managing natural disasters, as well as other actual or possible emergencies that threaten the community at large. In performing such activities, county emergency management agencies cooperate with both the Alabama Emergency Management Agency and federal authorities.
- **Constructing County Buildings and Managing Office Space.** This subfunction encompasses the responsibility of constructing courthouses and other county buildings. The Code of Alabama 1975 § 11-3-11, authorizes the commission to build and manage property owned by the county and to designate office areas by placing personnel at each location in the building. The commission's responsibilities in this area extend to county government as a whole and therefore warrant designation as a separate subfunction, rather than inclusion under the property management activity of the Administering Internal Operations subfunction.
- **Administering Internal Operations.** A significant portion of the County Commission's work includes general administrative, financial, and personnel activities performed to support the programmatic areas of the agency including:

Managing the Agency: Activities include internal office management activities common to most government agencies such as corresponding and communicating, scheduling, meeting, documenting policy and procedures, reporting, litigating, legislating (drafting, tracking), publicizing and providing information, managing records, and managing information systems and technology.

Managing Finances: Activities include budgeting (preparing and reviewing budget package, submitting the budget package to the Department of Finance, documenting amendments and performance of the budget); purchasing (requisitioning and purchasing supplies and equipment, receipting and invoicing for goods, and authorizing payment for products received); accounting for the expenditure, encumbrance, disbursement, and reconciliation of funds within the agency's budget through a uniform system of accounting and reporting; authorizing travel; contracting with companies or individuals; bidding for products and services; and assisting in the audit process.

Managing Human Resources: Activities include recruiting and hiring eligible individuals to fill positions within the agency; providing compensation to employees; providing benefits to employees such as leave, health insurance, unemployment compensation, worker's compensation, injury compensation, retirement, and death benefits; supervising employees by evaluating performance, granting leave, and monitoring the accumulation of leave; training and providing continuing education for employees; investigating and disciplining.

Managing Properties, Facilities, and Resources: Activities include inventorying and accounting for non-consumable property and reporting property information to the appropriate authority; leasing and/or renting offices or facilities; providing security for property managed by the agency; insuring property; and assigning, inspecting and maintaining agency property.

Records Appraisal of County Commissions

The following is a discussion of the three major categories of records created and/or maintained by the County Commissions: Temporary Records, Permanent Records, and Records No Longer Created.

Temporary Records

Temporary records should be held for what is considered their active life and be disposed of once all fiscal, legal, and administrative requirements have been met. Some of the temporary records created by the board are discussed below:

- **Records Documenting the Issuance and Redemption of County Bonds.** This revision is a broadened version of our old schedule for Redeemed Bonds and Interest Coupons. It includes additional records such as obligation warrants, copies of authorizing ordinances, preliminary and final financial statements, certificates, as well as interest coupons. Information in the records may include descriptions/amounts of bonds and/or interest, and the names and addresses of persons presenting the demand for payment. The records' retention period remains unchanged: two years following the audit period in which the bonds were redeemed.
- **Subdivision Files: Performance Bonds for Contractors.** These records consist of performance bonds for contractors engaged in subdivision construction projects within the municipality. They are assigned the same 7-year retention period as related permits and inspection reports, based on the statute of limitations for suing contractors (Code of Alabama 1975 § 6-5-221 through -227 [revised 2011]).
- **Disaster Public Assistance Files.** County EMA staff coordinate with state and federal authorities to obtain grants/loans for restoring public systems and facilities after a disaster. This series documents the application and disbursement of federal assistance to communities within the county EMA's jurisdiction. Typical records include applications for assistance, briefing materials, project worksheets, correspondence, documentation of funds disbursed, and monthly claims for reimbursement of expenses. The Code of Federal Regulations (44 CFR 13.42) mandates three-year retention of these records.
- **"Drug Free Workplace" Records.** These records document county substance abuse policies and training, as well as drug and alcohol testing of county employees. Under the federal Americans With Disabilities Act, such medical-related records may not be included in employee personnel files. The proposed disposition is partly based on 49 CFR Ch. VI 655.71 (10-1-05 edition) but is revised here in light of Alabama's drug-free workplace law, the Code of Alabama 1975 § 25-5-330 through -335 (1995), which requires only one- to two-year retention of drug-testing records. While the RDA's requirements remain somewhat more stringent than that law's, drug-testing policies and procedures are no longer appraised as permanent. Their proposed retention period (4 years after supersession) covers most statutes of limitations that might apply to acts committed by an employee "under the influence," which could require a local

government to document its drug-testing policies in effect at the time those acts took place.

- **Facilities/Buildings Security Records.** These records document the county's efforts to provide security to members of the public using its buildings and facilities, as well as to monitor the admission of staff and visitors to these areas. They may include visitors' logs or sign-in sheets, staff swipe card logs, alarm system logs, recordings of security monitoring or response and any other records documenting security staff's response to alarms or emergencies. In this edition of the RDA, retention requirements are lengthened to six months for security recordings that do not become part of a case file, in compliance with recently approved requirements for such recordings held by other local government jurisdictions.

Permanent Records

The Archives Division recommends the following records as permanent.

Making and Implementing Policy

- **Administrative Correspondence.** This correspondence documents the formulation of policy or rule-making decisions by the county commission or other county officials. It may reflect the influence of citizens on policy development, include statistical or technical information of long-term administrative value, and document planning activities conducted by the county commission and allied agencies, such as state or federal authorities or the area's regional planning commission.
- **County Commission Minutes, Meeting Agendas, and Packets.** These records document meetings of the county commission. The Code of Alabama 1975 § 11-3-18 mandates that the commission's chairman record the proceedings at its meetings. Minutes, along with meeting agendas and packet materials reviewed by the commission (copies of budgets, work plans, and other background information), are essential to document the evolution of commission policy and procedures. Under the provisions of the Code of Alabama 1975 § 36-25A-2, commission work sessions are defined as open meetings. A note has therefore been added to the schedule stating that minutes and related records of work sessions are included in the disposition.
- **Resolutions.** Commission policy statements, regulatory actions, and other decisions on matters that affect the county are embodied in the form of resolutions passed at commission meetings. Annual budgets, and amendments to the budgets, also take the form of resolutions. Along with meeting minutes, resolutions are the county commission's primary legislative records. They are essential for documenting policy development and are therefore appraised as permanent.
- **Administrative Codes and Regulations.** In performing various administrative and regulatory duties, the county commission may approve detailed codes and regulations to supplement its resolutions. Codes and regulations in such areas as industrial

development, public health, medical service, utilities, and waste disposal may be based on state and federal requirements or cooperative agreements with nearby municipalities. (See Title 11, Chapter 80 of the Code of Alabama 1975.) Under the Code of Alabama 1975 § 11-13-1 and -2, the county commission may periodically codify its resolutions, legislative acts of local application, and administrative codes and regulations.

Authorizing Revenue Collection and Collecting Revenue.

Permanent documentation of this subfunction is found in commission resolutions authorizing revenue collection. The actual collection of revenue is permanently documented in general ledgers/trial balances and audit reports, listed under the Administering Internal Operations subfunction, and in records maintained by county taxation officials

Facilitating Elections

- **Maps of County Electoral Precincts.** Under the Code of Alabama 1975 § 17-5A-3, “each county governing body shall provide and maintain at all times a suitable map showing the current geographical boundaries with designation of precincts and a legal description of the geographical boundaries of each precinct. Each county governing body shall send a copy of each map, with description attached, to the county board of registrars, the probate judge, and the [state] reapportionment task force.” These records are therefore permanent, although the disposition permits the destruction of duplicate copies as soon as they are superseded.

Providing Utility and Sanitation Services

- **Utility Board/Commission Meeting/Hearing Minutes, Agendas, and Packets.** These records include meeting and hearing minutes of the board or commission overseeing the operation of the county’s public utilities, except for those under the sole jurisdiction of incorporated towns or cities. Such records, like those of other boards and commissions, are permanent because they are essential to document decisions of the board. The records also include a copy of the meeting agenda and any background materials (packets) distributed to or reviewed by the utility board or commission. This series has been retitled to conform with identical records listed in the municipal RDA.
- **Utility System Maps, Plans, Profiles, and Photographs.** These records include maps, profiles, plans, and photographs of sewer systems, water reservoirs, and other utility constructions operated by the county or its service vendors. Under Title 11, Chapter 50 of the Code of Alabama 1975, such records shall be available for inspection by the affected property owners. However, the proposed disposition allows the eventual destruction of records for systems or reservoirs not actually leased or purchased by the county after the system is no longer in use.
- **Annual Water Quality Reports.** These are “reports pertaining to the quality of water or operation of [a county’s] water supply system.” They are required under the federal Safe Drinking Water Act of 1974, as amended in 1986 and 1996, and now codified under Title

42 CFR. Under the Alabama Administrative Code, Chapter 335-7-10.05(h), copies of the report “shall be furnished to [ADEM] upon request and must be available for review by the public.” Such reports may contain “information about the source of water and the process used to purify it,” as well as tables of annual laboratory test results, public health information, and tips on maintaining home sewer systems. The records provide excellent summary documentation of county water works’ services to citizens and compliance with state and federal regulations. They are appraised here as permanent, as they were in the 2008 revision of the municipal RDA.

- **Landfill Records: Records of Closed Landfills.** Sanitary landfills are monitored by the Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM), and their record-keeping is governed by Chapter 335.13-4-.29 of the Alabama Administrative Code. Landfill records include permits, operational records, engineering drawings; closure and post-closure care plans, and explosive gas and groundwater monitoring and correction plans. The previous disposition of most records – “Retain 30 years after closure of landfill, or until released by ADEM” – was based on 2007 conversations with ADEM officials. Recently, they have informed us that ADEM does not require local retention of outdated closure, post-closure, and monitoring plans beyond three years, although current plans must always be available for public inspection at the landfill. When a local landfill closes, ADEM purportedly retains its final records permanently, but the agency does not require localities to keep closed landfills’ engineering drawings or final closure and groundwater monitoring plans. Nevertheless, landfills may have an environmental impact lasting many years beyond their closure, so this edition of the RDA assigns the county commission that responsibility.

Building and Maintaining Roads and Bridges

- **Right-of-Way Deeds, Maps, and Drawings.** As they document the county’s ownership of right-of-way over lands on which roads and bridges are constructed, these records have permanent legal and historical value. They contain a legal description and diagram of the right-of-way, and the land’s location. A copy of the deed is kept on file at the county probate office.
- **Field Survey Notebooks.** These records comprise basic surveying notes for county road construction projects. Original field notes are among the earliest records created in Alabama counties, so these records have permanent administrative and historical value. They include information on the road or bridge’s location (latitude, longitude, and magnetic bearing), boundaries of rights-of-way, topographic data, and ownership of adjoining properties. These records may no longer be created in some counties.
- **Road Project Plans, Specification, Maps, Plats, and Photographs.** These records provide comprehensive documentation of the construction, maintenance, and repair of county roads. Information available includes overall project plans and specifications, photographs, and maps or drawings. Because these records have historical interest and document one of the county commission’s most important statutory duties, overall project plans, specifications, maps, and plats are appraised as permanent.

- **Bridge Project Plans, Specifications, Maps, Plats, and Photographs.** These records provide comprehensive documentation of the construction, maintenance, and repair of county bridges. The plans or drawings document the bridge's location and structural details, materials used in construction, and flood levels. Information available in them includes overall project plans and specification, photographs, and maps or drawings. Although these records have no administrative utility beyond the life of the bridge, they may have permanent historical value in documenting important, if transitory, features of the county landscape.

Providing Public Transportation Facilities and Services

- **Transportation Authorities' Meeting/Hearing Minutes, Agendas, and Packets.** These records document the meetings of boards, commissions, or authorities that oversee the operation of county airports or public transit systems. They include agendas and packet materials (copies of budgets, work plans, reports, and other background information) reviewed by members prior to meetings. Meeting minutes and related records are essential for documenting policy development by the county bodies responsible for transportation services.
- **Airport Maps, Plans, and Blueprints.** Like maps, plans, and blueprints for other county buildings and facilities, these records are appraised as permanent for their evidentiary and historical value. Master vs. "as-built" plans show any differences between projected and completed airport construction or improvement that might affect the safety and efficiency of airport operations. Layouts are continually updated to reflect changes that may influence the airport's technical performance.

Providing Senior Services

- **Senior Citizen Program Records.** Counties may operate senior centers or provide other services to senior citizens, either in cooperation with area councils on aging or independently. Retention periods for records in this section comply with minimum requirements for area councils on aging in the Alabama Administrative Code, Chapter 70-X-12-.02. Based on federal requirements, they may differ in some instances from retention periods for similar records elsewhere in the RDA. The retention period for Medicaid Waiver Case Management Client Files complies with a Medicaid directive. The revised retention for Senior AIDES Program files is based on a directive from the National Senior Citizens Education and Research Center, the federal agency that oversees the Senior AIDES Program.

Planning and Improving Community Development/Recruiting Business and Industry

- **Flood Insurance Rate Maps.** These maps (FIRMs) are provided to counties by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). They show insurance rates, based on the likelihood of flooding, for each piece of property located within county boundaries. The Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs (ADECA) acts as a

liaison between localities and FEMA in incorporating flood prevention into civic planning. Each county must develop a flood prevention resolution, based on the latest FEMA map, and keep the FIRM “on file and accessible [to] the public in perpetuity or until a new map is issued.” ADECA urges that outdated flood maps also be retained permanently. Besides demonstrating compliance with ADECA and FEMA regulations, they document a county’s cognizance of changing public safety issues in the process of development. Because the maps are vital to all planning activities, they are placed here rather than under the subfunctions governing zoning or construction projects.

- **Industrial Development Board Minutes, Meeting Agendas, and Packets.** These records document the meetings of boards or authorities responsible for recruiting business and industry and planning the county’s industrial development. They include agendas and packet materials (copies of budgets, work plans, reports, and other background information) reviewed by members prior to or during meetings. These board minutes and related records provide essential documentation of county economic planning.

Zoning and Regulating Subdivisions

- **Planning/Zoning Board/Board of Adjustment Meeting/Hearing Minutes, Agendas, and Packets.** These records document the role of the county zoning board or board of adjustment in planning and regulating the location and development of business or residential areas within the county. They include agendas and packet materials (copies of budgets, work plans, reports, and other background information) reviewed by members prior to or during meetings. Like the minutes of all similar boards and authorities, these records (which are already scheduled in the municipal RDA) are appraised as permanent, as they provide long-term documentation of policy decisions and community development.
- **Subdivision Files.** Like similar files for roads and bridges, these records document one of the county commission’s statutory responsibilities: evaluating contractors’ plans and specifications for compliance with county requirements. Records appraised here as permanent include “final plans, plats, maps, and photographs” showing roads, rights-of-way, drainage ditches, and other surface improvements. “Other materials in files (inspection reports, permits, performance bonds, correspondence)” – and also soil testing reports – are appraised as temporary. Based on a 2011 revision of the Code of Alabama 1975 § 6-5-221 through -227, their retention period is lowered from 13 to 7 years in this edition of the RDA.
- **Historical Aerial Photographs and Final Maps.** Views of roads, bridges, bodies of water, and other county structures and topography are recorded in photographs and maps. They may be used in planning, economic development, regulation, and other core functions of county government. This item includes both conventional photographs and maps (which have always been permanent) and GIS maps and photographs that can provide long-term historical documentation of the county’s physical development. RDA

item 8.04 calls for such maps and photographs to be selected from those produced by the county's GIS system (a perpetual, but continually updated, database).

Licensing/Permitting/Inspecting

Permanent documentation of this subfunction is found in general ledgers/trial balances and audit reports, listed under the Administering Internal Operations subfunction.

Managing Emergencies

- **Minutes, Agendas, and Packets of the Local Emergency Planning Committee and/or Emergency Management Oversight Board.** These records document proceedings of the committee and/or board responsible for oversight and advice on emergency management functions within the county. They may include minutes, agendas, and packet materials; staff reports; correspondence with local, state, and federal agencies; and related documentation. These records provide primary documentation of emergency management programs and planning among various jurisdictions in and beyond the county.
- **County Emergency Operations Plans, Procedures, and Guidelines.** These records consist of comprehensive emergency management plans, emergency operations plans, continuity of operations (COOP) plans, and standard operating procedures (SOP's) and guidelines (SOG's) created by each county EMA. They establish a framework for ensuring that the jurisdiction is adequately prepared to deal with various categories of emergencies. According to federal requirements, emergency operations plans must be updated regularly. Copies of all county emergency operations plans are provided to the state EMA, which maintains them permanently under its RDA. However, the approved plans are deemed by the county EMA officials staff consulted to have the importance to warrant permanent retention at the local level.
- **Emergency and Disaster Incident Records.** These records document planning and response activities taken during and after emergencies that occur within the county EMA's jurisdiction. They may include action plans, photographs, incident reports, damage reports, response reports, weather event files, correspondence, and related records, exclusive of those covered in Disaster Public Assistance Files. Besides their utility to the EMA in planning the future management of similar emergencies, these records have historical value in documenting memorable disasters occurring in the county.
- **Public Education Program Records.** These records related to the design and implementation of emergency management educational and outreach programs presented by the county EMA. They may include planning documentation, program descriptions, instructional materials, course outlines, enrollment and attendance records, presentations, audio and video materials, and course evaluations. Only planning documentation is appraised as permanent.

- **Hazardous Materials Incident Reports.** These records detail all responses to hazardous materials incidents. The report contains the date and type of incident, the name and address of the party involved, and the incident's disposition (such as the recovery costs involved). Because environmental consultants frequently contact local EMA offices when conducting Phase I impact studies, these reports have long-term importance and are recommended for permanent retention.

Constructing County Buildings and Managing Office Space

- **County Building Construction and Renovation Files.** These files document the design, construction, repair, and renovation of courthouses and other county-owned buildings. Included may be building specifications and floor plans, plans of proposed work, lists of materials, correspondence, memoranda, reports, blueprints, site plans, elevation details, and financial records. Besides providing fiscal accountability, some records have permanent value in preserving detailed information on courthouses and other significant county buildings, such as county archives or buildings of significant historical interest.

Administering Internal Operations: Managing the Agency

- **Administrative Policies and Procedures.** These records include policies and procedures established by the county commission on a variety of issues regarding its relations with the public, other governmental or private entities, and county employees. They provide primary evidence of commission's philosophy and execution of its mandated functions under the Code of Alabama 1975.
- **Annual Reports.** County commissions may create annual narrative and/or financial reports describing their activities during the calendar or fiscal year. Such reports provide summary documentation of commission functions, projects, and activities, as well as an ongoing history of the county and its government.
- **Historical and Publicity Files.** The commission may issue press releases or informational brochures and videos to publicize significant county projects or activities. Either the commission or individual commissioners may retain photographs, copies of speeches or presentations, and similar records that document significant county events and the commission's history. These records have evidentiary and historical value that extends well beyond their immediate utility to the commission. They should be permanently retained in the commission's offices or in a local library, archives, or historical society under the terms of a local government records depository agreement.
- **Websites and Social Media Sites.** Many Alabama counties have developed websites for responding to public inquiries and providing information on county government affairs. More recently, they have begun to develop social media sites, which are included in this edition of the RDA. Material on these sites may include: information on the county's location; population; demography; organization and officials; economic, cultural, and educational resources; transitory information on county events; and other information describing the local "way of life." In order to provide documentation of this record over

time, the proposed disposition calls for a “snapshot” of the site to be retained as often as significant changes are made.

- **Geographic Information System (GIS) Records.** These records consist of geospatial data that describes particular locations, areas, or geographic features within the county. GIS systems may be used for a variety of purposes, such as planning and zoning, construction projects, or emergency response. Although records may be continually updated, the system itself is maintained as a perpetual data file. Datasets within the system are assigned short-term dispositions, while many output documents (such as maps and aerial photographs) are treated separately elsewhere in the RDA. Because GIS records are vital to a wide variety of county activities and services, the disposition statement calls for permanent retention of an annual “snapshot” of the system. This schedule replaces an earlier county commission schedule for GIS records.

Administering Internal Operations: Managing Finances

- **Approved Annual Budgets.** The commission’s duty to create an annual budget for the county is mandated by the Code of Alabama 1975 § 11-3-13. A copy of the approved budget is included with commission minutes and thus becomes a permanent record. The proposed disposition statement allows additional copies of the budget to be destroyed.
- **Annual Financial Reports.** At the end of the fiscal year, a final statement of the county’s finances may be included in the commission minutes and published in the local newspaper. The proposed disposition again permits the destruction of additional copies.
- **Audit Reports, Examiners of Public Accounts.** These records document the county’s overall financial condition, and the findings of the Examiners of Public Accounts, during each audit period. They include information on the county’s current accounting procedures, bookkeeping problems, compliance with state and federal regulations, and record-keeping practices. Along with general ledgers, audit reports are primary records of fiscal accountability. Theoretically, the Examiners transfer copies of all county audit reports to the Department of Archives and History; but this fact does not ensure that county citizens – or the commissions themselves – will have long-term, convenient access to these records at the local level. Therefore, we propose that audit reports, which have previously been scheduled for 10-year retention, be reappraised as permanent. The Association of County Commissions of Alabama (ACCA) has requested that this edition of the RDA stipulate that the audit reports referred to are those from the Examiners of Public Accounts.
- **General Ledgers – general ledgers and detailed year-end trial balances created prior to 1975.** The general ledger is the record of final entry for all financial transactions: collecting fees and other revenue, purchasing, investing, administering state and federal funds, and general accounting. Originally, general ledgers were manually created; now, these records and another financial summary, the detailed year-end trial balance, are often electronically created. This revision of the RDA limits permanent retention to general ledgers and trial balances to records created before 1975. Later records retain the 10-year

period previously approved for those in electronic format. Annual Financial reports and Audit Reports provide permanent documentation of county financial practices.

- **Minutes of Claims Allowed or Denied.** Under the Code of Alabama 1975 § 11-12-4, “the county commission must audit all claims against the county, and every claim...must be registered in a book kept for that purpose...” These records document claims against the county. Minutes of Claims, which are the records of final entry on such matters, include information on claimants, amounts of claims, claims allowed or denied, dates of decisions, and amounts of final payments.
- **Grant Project Final Narrative Reports.** Either directly or through the assistance of regional planning commissions, county governments are frequently the recipients of state or federal grants. Most documentation associated with these grants is short-term accounting material. The final narrative report, however, summarizes the goals of the grant, how the money was used, and what was accomplished. They therefore have permanent evidentiary value in documenting important county projects.
- **Records Documenting County Funding of Non-Profit Agencies.** These records were added to the municipal RDA in April 2015. They are also appropriate for inclusion in the county commissions’ RDA Records in the series include applications, contracts, reports, and financial records. The existing schedule for Grant Project Files covers only grants awarded to, not by, the county. Appraised as permanent are legislation establishing program requirements, policies and guidelines; guidelines and application forms for each funding cycle; and final narrative reports from funded agencies.

Administering Internal Operations: Managing Human Resources

- **Personnel Board Meeting/Hearing Minutes, Agendas, and Packets.** These records document meetings and hearings of the county personnel board, along with the agenda of topics to be discussed at the meeting and any attachments or other documents provided to board members. These records are essential for documenting county personnel policies and administration.
- **Employee Handbooks.** Employee handbooks provide guidance to new employees about personnel rules and other county policies and procedures. They may serve as evidence of compliance with state and federal hiring practices and may be used in personnel-related litigation.
- **Employee Newsletters.** Employee newsletters offer a narrative of the county commission’s employment policies, employee programs and benefits, and information on individual employees. Along with employee handbooks, they provide the primary documentation of human resources management.
- **Job Classifications and Pay Plans.** These records document job classifications for all positions covered by the county personnel system. They include the title, qualifications, duties, and pay range for each county government position. As the most complete record

of county job classifications, they provide a profile of county government and its services to citizens over time. The proposed retention provides for shorter retention of copies held by other county agencies, including the commission itself if there is a separate personnel department.

- **Annual Reports of Promotions and New Hires.** These records summarize overall county personnel activity and turnover during the year. They may also include reports of employee retirements, resignations, and terminations. In large counties where personnel operations are handled by a separate department, this statistical compilation usually serves as the department's annual report.
- **Training Records – Training standards, policies, procedures, and publications.** These records document the county's overall standards, policies, and procedures in providing specialized training to its employees. They may include general policy statements or guidelines, training manuals, or other publications. Like other administrative policies and procedures, they are appraised as permanent. Documentation of training standards may also be needed to demonstrate that employees received adequate training in the performance of their job responsibilities.

Records No Longer Created

- **Criminal Contract Records/Records of Convicts Sentenced to Hard Labor.** These records documented the county's leasing of convicts sentenced to hard labor to private companies or individuals. Information in them included each convict's name, sex, race, type of crime, and length of sentence; the name of the contractor and terms of the contract; the presiding judge's approval; and certification by the judge of probate. After a decision by the Alabama Supreme Court (ca. 1929) that leasing convicts to private entities amounted to involuntary servitude, the practice was discontinued. Because of their historical value, these records (including those created after 1900) are appraised as permanent.

Permanent Records List County Commissions

Making and Implementing Policy

1. Administrative Correspondence
2. County Commission Minutes, Meeting Agendas, and Packets
3. Resolutions
4. Administrative Codes and Regulations

Facilitating Elections

1. Maps of County Electoral Precincts: original maps

Providing Utility and Sanitation Services

1. Utility Board/Commission Records: Meeting/hearing minutes, agendas, and packets
2. Utility System Maps, Plans, Profiles, and Photographs
3. Annual Water Quality Reports
4. Engineering Drawings, Final Closure/Post-Closure Care Plans, Explosive Gas/Groundwater Monitoring/Correction Plans for Closed Landfills

Building and Maintaining Roads and Bridges

1. Right-of-Way Deeds, Maps, and Drawings
2. Field Survey Notebooks
3. Road Project Plans, Specifications, Maps, Plats, and Photographs
4. Bridge Project Plans, Specifications, Maps, Plats, and Photographs

Providing Public Transportation Facilities and Services

1. Transportation Authority Records: Meeting/hearing minutes, agendas, and packets
2. Airport Maps, Plans, and Blueprints

Planning and Improving Community Development/Recruiting Business and Industry

1. Industrial Development Board Records: Minutes, meeting agendas, and packets

Zoning and Regulating Subdivisions

1. Planning/Zoning Board/Board of Adjustment Records: Meeting/hearing minutes, agendas, and packets
2. Subdivision Files: Final plans, plats, maps, and photographs
3. Aerial Photographs and Final Maps

Constructing County Buildings and Managing Office Space

1. County Building Construction and Renovation Files

Administrating Internal Operations: Managing the Agency

1. Administrative Policies and Procedures
2. Annual Reports
3. Historical and Publicity Files
4. Websites and Social Media Sites
5. GIS Systems: historical snapshots

Administering Internal Operations: Managing Finances

1. Approved Annual Budgets
2. Annual Financial Reports
3. Audit Reports
4. General Ledgers and Detailed Year-End Trial Balances: Created prior to 1975
5. Grant Project Final Narrative Reports
6. Minutes of claims allowed or denied
7. Resolutions or other directives establishing program requirements, policies, and guidelines
8. Guidelines and application forms for each funding cycle
9. Final narrative reports funded agencies

Administering Internal Operations: Managing Human Resources

1. Personnel Board Meeting/Hearing Minutes, Agendas, and Packets
2. Employee Handbooks
3. Employee Newsletters
4. Job Classifications and Pay Plans
5. Annual Report of Promotions and New Hires
6. Training Records – training standards, policies, procedures, and publications

Records No Longer Created

1. Criminal Contract Records/Records of Convicts Sentenced to Hard Labor

County Commissions Records Disposition Authority

This Records Disposition Authority (RDA) is issued by the Local Government Records Commission under the authority granted by the Code of Alabama 1975 § 41-13-5 and 41-13-22 through 24. It was compiled by the Archives Division, Alabama Department of Archives and History (ADAH), which serves as the Commission's staff, in cooperation with representatives of the County Commissions. The RDA lists records created and maintained by the Agency in carrying out their mandated functions and activities. It establishes minimum retention periods and disposition instructions for those records and provides the legal authority for the Agency to implement records destruction.

Alabama law requires public officials to create and maintain records that document the business of their offices. These records must be protected from "mutilation, loss, or destruction," so that they may be transferred to an official's successor in office and may be made available to members of the public. Records also must be kept in accordance with auditing standards approved by the Examiners of Public Accounts (Code of Alabama 1975 § 36-12-2, 36-12-4, and 41-5-23). For assistance in implementing this RDA, or for advice on records disposition or other records management concerns, contact the agency records manager or ADAH Archives Division at (334) 242-4452.

Explanation of Records Requirements

The RDA shall govern the disposition of all records, regardless of format, created by the agency from creation to dissolution. Please contact the staff of the Department of Archives and History before destroying any records created prior to 1940.

This RDA supersedes any previous records disposition schedules or RDAs governing the retention of the records created by the Agency. Copies of superseded schedules are no longer valid and may not be used for records disposition.

The RDA establishes retention and disposition instructions for records listed below, regardless of the medium on which those records may be kept. Electronic mail, for example, is a communications tool that may record permanent or temporary information. As for records in any other format, the retention periods for e-mail records are governed by the requirements of the subfunctions to which the records belong.

Certain other record-like materials are not actually regarded as official records and may be disposed of under this RDA. Such materials include (1) duplicate record copies that do not require official action, so long as the creating office maintains the original record for the period required; (2) catalogs, trade journals, and other publications received that require no action and do not document agency activities; (3) stocks of blank stationery, blank forms, or other surplus materials that are not subject to audit and have become obsolete; (4) transitory records, which are temporary records created for short-term, internal purposes, may include, but are not limited to, telephone call-back messages, drafts of ordinary documents not needed for their evidential value, copies of material sent for information purposes but not needed by the receiving office for future business, and internal communications about social activities; (5) honorary materials, plaques,

awards, presentations, certificates, and gifts received or maintained by the agency staff. They may be disposed of without documentation of destruction.

Records Disposition Requirements

This section of the RDA is arranged by subfunctions of the Agency and lists the groups of records created and/or maintained as a result of activities and transactions performed in carrying out these subfunctions. The Agency may submit requests to revise specific records disposition requirements to the State Records Commission for consideration at its regular biannual meetings.

Making and Implementing Policy

1.01 Administrative Correspondence. This correspondence documents the formulation of policy or rule-making decisions by the county commission or other county officials.
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

1.02 County Commission Minutes, Meeting Agendas, and Packets. These records include the official minutes of county commission meetings, along with the agenda of topics to be discussed at the meeting and any attachments or other documents provided to commission members.
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD (Code of Alabama 1975 § 11-3-18).

Note: Under the provisions of the Code of Alabama 1975 § 36-25A-2, commission work sessions are defined as open meetings. Minutes and related records of work sessions are therefore included in this disposition.

1.03 Recordings of Meetings. These recordings provide a verbatim account of debate and public input at meetings of the county commission, and other county public meetings. They are normally used only as an aid to preparation of the minutes.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until minutes are approved.

Note: Under the provisions of the Code of Alabama 1975 § 36-25A-2, commission work sessions are defined as open meetings. Recording of work sessions are also included in this disposition.

1.04 Resolutions (including Annual Budgets). These records include commission policy statements, regulatory actions, and other legislative decisions by the commission. Annual budgets and amendments to the budget also take the form of resolutions.
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

1.05 Administrative Codes and Regulations. These records are created to track draft legislation in the Alabama State legislature. Proposed legislation may affect one or several counties. The files may include copies of draft legislation, statistics, and name of legislative sponsors, roll call voters, position papers, and correspondence.
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

1.06 Legislative Reference Files.

- a. **Legislative tracking files.** These records are created to track draft legislation in the Alabama state legislature. Proposed legislation may affect one or several counties. The files may include copies of draft legislation, statistics, and names of legislative sponsors, roll call votes, position papers, and correspondence.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for useful life.
- b. **Code of Alabama.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain in office until superseded.
- c. **Acts of Alabama.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain in office until amended.
- d. **House and Senate Journals.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain in office until superseded.

Records Management Recommendation: Before deciding to destroy old editions of the Code of Alabama, Acts of Alabama, or House and Senate Journals, offer them for placement in a local library, archives, or historical society.

Authorizing Revenue Collection and Collecting Revenue

2.01 Errors, Litigations, & Insolvents Submitted by the County Revenue Commissioner/Tax Collector. The county's chief taxation official must submit a final report to the commission on uncollected tax balances, such as those due from insolvent persons or resulting from errors in assessment. If satisfied that the revenue officer has made a diligent effort to collect the taxes, the commission certifies the report and sends it to the State Comptroller and Department of Revenue. Approval of the report is recorded in commission minutes.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

2.02 Records Documenting the Issuance and Redemption of County Bonds. These records document the issuance and redemption of county bonds. They may include obligation warrants, copies of authorizing ordinances, preliminary and final financial statements, certificates, and interest coupons. Information may include descriptions/amounts of bonds and/or interest, and the names and addresses of persons presenting the demand for payment.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following the audit period in which bonds are redeemed.

2.03 Records Documenting the Collection of Sales, Use, Lodging, Liquor, Tobacco, and Gasoline Taxes. These records document sales and use taxes, as well as any lodging, liquor, tobacco, and gasoline taxes collected by the county. They include returns on these tax categories collected from individuals or businesses.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

Facilitating Elections

3.01 Maps of County Electoral Precincts. These maps show the current geographical boundaries and legal descriptions of county electoral precincts. Information available in the map includes the name and location of each precinct, geographical features, and the date of the base map or latest revision. Disposition of the records is as follows:

- a. **Original maps maintained by the county commission.**
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.
- b. **Duplicates maintained by the commission, board of registrars, or judge of probate.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until superseded.

3.02 Petitions and Requests for Election to Levy County and District School Taxes. These records document a petition by 200 or more qualified voters of the county, or a request by a city or county board of education, for the commission to hold an election to determine whether or not a special tax should be levied for funding public schools. Information in the petition or request, date of petition or request, and signatures of voters.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for 6 months after election.

Providing Utility and Sanitation Services

4.01 Utility Board/Commission Records.

- a. **Meeting/hearing minutes, agendas, and packets.** These records include meeting minutes of the board or commission overseeing operation of the county's public utilities, excluding boards or commissions under municipal jurisdiction. Records include a copy of the meeting agenda and any background materials (packets) distributed to or reviewed by board or commission members.
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.
- b. **Hearing files.** These files document citizen appeals to the utility board or commission, as well as hearings and the board's decisions. Records may include correspondence with citizens, hearing notices, reports, and other material maintained in case files.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after board's decision and settlement of all appeals.

4.02 Utility System Maps, Plans, Profiles, and Photographs. These records include maps, profiles, plans, and photographs of sewer systems, water reservoirs, and other utility constructions operated by the county or its reservoirs, and other utility constructions operated by the county or its service vendors. Disposition of the records is as follows:

- a. **Maps, plans, profiles, and photographs of systems or reservoirs leased, purchased, or operated by the county.**
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

- b. **Maps, plans, profiles, and photographs of external systems or reservoirs not leased or purchased by the county and operated by a service vendor.**

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until system or reservoir is no longer in use.

4.03 Utility and Sanitation User Agreements. These records document agreements between the county and users of its utility or sanitation services. Information available includes the names and addresses of customers, amount of deposits paid, and terms of the agreement.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years after the audit period in which the agreement was terminated.

4.04 Utility and Sanitation Meter Reading, Billing, and Collection Records. These records document meter readings and billing activity on individual utility and sanitation customer accounts. Information available includes names and addresses of customers, account numbers, amount due, and date paid. This series includes customers' remittance copies of utility bills and Daily Cash Receipt Reports.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

4.05 Applications and Exemptions for Utility Fee Exemption. These records document the process that determines whether persons may be exempted from solid waste collection or other utility charges.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

4.06 Utility and Sanitation Customer Complaint Logs. These records document complaints by county utility or sanitation customers and the agency's actions in regard to them. They may include such information as the customer's name and address; date, time, and nature of the complaint; names of utility personnel assigned to respond; and any actions taken.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years.

4.07 Utility Department Operational Records. These records document routine utility department operations that do not relate to billing and collection. Items include work orders, operations/dispatch logs, operational reports, and records documenting variations in amounts of power or water provided over time. Disposition of the records is as follows:

- a. **Work orders.**

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year.

- b. **Operations/dispatch logs.**

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years.

- c. **Operational reports (daily, monthly, quarterly, or annual reports of utility operations).**

- i. Annual or quarterly reports (if no annual report produced).

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 5 years.

- ii. Daily, monthly, or quarterly reports (if annual report produced).
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for useful life.
- d. **Records documenting power failures, or similar interruptions in service, to individual business or residential customers.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 10 years.

4.08 Water Treatment Surveys and Reports. County water treatment systems are subject to regulation by the Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM). (See Chapter 335-7-10.05 of the Alabama Administrative Code.) These records include the following:

- a. **Water quality control tests and monthly reports to ADEM.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years or until next sanitary survey, whichever is longer.
- b. **Water reservoir level and temperature readings.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for useful life.
- c. **Water temperature operational reports (daily reports).**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 5 years.
- d. **Bacteriological monitoring reports.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 5 years.
- e. **Water system sanitary surveys and reports.** These records include sanitary surveys and reports, summaries, and correspondence related to surveys or system inspections conducted by system staff or by local, state, or federal authorities.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 10 years.
- f. **Complaint files.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after complaint is received.
- g. **Water system regulation violation correction reports.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after correction of violation.
- h. **Water system regulation exemption records.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after exemption or variance.
- i. **Chemical analysis reports.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 10 years.
- j. **Disinfection monitoring plans.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until replacement plan has been approved by ADEM.

- k. **Annual water quality reports.** These reports are required annually under the federal Safe Drinking Water Act and the Alabama Administrative Code. They may contain summary documentation of water sources and purification processes, annual laboratory test results, public health information, and advice to citizens on maintaining their home sewer systems.
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

4.09 Landfill Records. These records (governed by Chapter 335.13-4-29 of the Alabama Administrative Code) are required by the Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM) for the management of sanitary landfills. They include the following:

- a. **Permits.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 5 years.
- b. **Engineering drawings: current closure/post-closure care plans; explosive gas/groundwater monitoring/correction plans.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain at landfill.
- c. **Superseded closure/post-closure care plans; explosive gas/groundwater monitoring/corrections plans.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years.
- d. **Engineering drawings; final closure/post-closure care plans; explosive gas/groundwater monitoring/corrections plans for closed landfills.**
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.
- e. **Operational reports (daily, monthly/quarterly, annual reports of garbage/trash intake).**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 10 years.

4.10 Landfill Service Collection Records. These records document billing and collection activities on landfill customer accounts. Information available includes customers' names and addresses, account numbers, amounts due, and amounts/dates paid.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

Note: For other routine records of utility and sanitation departments (grants, bids, and service contracts; personnel and training records; maintenance data on equipment and facilities), follow the disposition statements for such records in the "Administering Internal Operations" subfunctions.

4.11 Utility Equipment Rebates. These records document rebates which public utility companies may issue to encourage the installation, purchase, and/or use of certain utility equipment, including, but not limited to, water heaters and environmentally friendly appliances. Records produced may include, but are not limited to, application forms, receipts, equipment installation records, and check copies.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

Building and Maintaining Roads and Bridges

5.01 Right-of-way Deeds, Maps, and Drawings. These records document the county's ownership of right-of-way over lands on which roads and bridges are constructed. They contain a legal description and diagram of the right-of-way, and the land's location.

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

5.02 Field Survey Notebooks. These records comprise basic surveying notes for county road conduction projects. They include information on the road or bridge's location (latitude, longitude, and magnetic bearing), boundaries of rights-of-way, topographic data, and ownership of adjoining properties.

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

Note: Some counties may no longer create these records. Those that do not should continue to follow this retention for those previously created.

5.03 Road Project Plans, Specifications, Maps, Plats, and Photographs. These records provide comprehensive documentation of the construction and reconstruction of county roads. Information available in them includes overall project plans and specifications, photographs, and maps or drawings.

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

5.04 Road and Bridge Construction Project Files. These records document day-to-day activities on a road or bridge construction project site. The diaries note such information as the name of the contractor(s), project personnel, project name and number, weather condition, tests and test results, results of soil and structural component tests, progress reports, and cost estimates. They may also contain permit information, vendor applications, reports, and correspondence.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 10 years.

5.05 Bridge Project Plans, Specifications, Maps, Plats, and Photographs. These records provide comprehensive documentation of the construction and reconstruction of the county bridges. The plans or drawings document the bridge's location and structural details, materials used in construction, and flood levels. Information available in them includes overall project plans and specifications, photographs, and maps or drawings.

- a. **Records of bridges of significant historical interest (agency staff may wish to consult the state Department of Transportation, the Alabama Historical Commission, or the county historical society in evaluating the historical significance of local bridges).**

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

Records Management Recommendation: Retain in office for life of bridge; agency may then offer for transfer to a local library, archives, or historical society under the terms of a local government records deposit agreement.

b. **Records of other bridges.**

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for life of bridge.

5.06 Bridge Inspection Reports. These records document the periodic inspection of public bridges by county inspectors to comply with state and federal requirements. An inventory of bridge structures and inspection data is maintained at the state level (CFR 650.311). The reports include forms and other information on the bridge's age and location structural details, and grade of the structure. Photographs and drawings may also be included.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for life of bridge.

Note: For routine road and bridge operations records (accounting and purchasing records; grants, bids, and contracts; personnel and training records; work orders; operation logs, telephone /radio logs), follow the disposition statements for such records under "Administering Internal Operations."

Providing Public Transportation Services and Facilities

6.01 Transportation Authority Records.

- a. **Meeting/hearing minutes agendas, and packets.** These records document the meetings of boards, commissions, or authorities that oversee the operation of county airports or public transit systems. They include agendas and packet materials (copies of budgets, work plans, reports, and other background information) reviewed by members prior to meetings.

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

- b. **Hearing files.** These files document citizen appeals to the transportation authority, as well as hearings and the authority's decisions. Records may include correspondence with citizens, hearing notices, reports, and other material maintained in case files.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after authority's decision and settlement of all appeals.

6.02 Federal, State, and County Aviation Regulations. These records include Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) regulations, advisory circulars, and security operations manuals; the *Alabama Department of Aeronautics Manual*; county emergency management agencies' emergency operations manuals; and other materials used by county airport authorities in establishing policies and procedures.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until superseded.

6.03 Airport Certification and Procedures Manuals. These records include certification requirements, policies and procedures, and related information complied by the airport in compliance with FAA and other federal or state regulations. They govern airport operations in such areas as security, maintenance, concessions, contract formulation, and personnel. Individual manual pages or regulations may be superseded or discarded as requirements are updated by the FAA and other oversight authorities.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until superseded.

6.04 Airports Maps, Plans, and Blueprints. These records consist of at least one copy of all versions of maps, plans, and blueprints for county airports or related facilities, including any variations between master and “as built” plans.

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

6.05 Approach Slope Condition Reports. These records document approach slope conditions at county airports.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until superseded.

6.06 Airport Evacuation Agreements. These records document agreements made in plans for evacuating county airports.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until superseded.

Note: For routine operations records (accounting and purchasing records, grants, bids and contracts, personnel and training records, work orders, operation logs, telephone / radio logs, maintenance data on equipment and facilities) follow the disposition statements for such records in the RDA’s “Administering Internal Operations” sub functions.

6.07 Public Transit Program Administrative Files. These records document the county’s operation of public transit systems within its boundaries, as well as special transportation systems for the elderly or handicapped. Included are such records as copies of annual and quarterly reports to the state Department of Transportation, patron sign-in sheets, vehicle inspections, and accident reports.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

Note: Other routine administrative records for these services (such as financial records, personnel records, vehicle maintenance files, and correspondence) are covered in the RDA’s “Administering Internal Operations” subfunctions.

Providing Senior Services

7.01 Area Plans. Area councils on aging are responsible for developing uniform area plans. During the years it covers, an area plan provides a blueprint for all aspects of the council on aging’s operations.

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

7.02 Annual Operating Plans. These records offer a more detailed account of the senior services program and its financial planning on an annual basis.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain through completion of multi-year area plan.

7.03 Program Performance Reports (including Quarterly Financial Reports). These reports provide statistical information for programs administered under Title III of the Older Americans Act of 1965.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the records were created.

7.04 Senior Center Administrative Reports and Forms. These records document routine operations at senior or community centers within the local area. They may include such items as senior activity schedules, senior center booking information, reports on weekly activities and meals, daily attendance records, meal vouchers and certificates, service logs, home-delivered meal ratings, meal change requests, and client registration forms.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the records were created.

7.05 Service Analysis Reports. These are monthly reports that service providers under contract to the senior program submit to document operations at senior centers.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the records were created.

7.06 Senior Center and Contractor Evaluations. These records document inspections and evaluations of senior centers and other service providers by council on aging, county, or municipal personnel.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 10 years.

7.07 Legal Assistance Reports, Forms, and Case Files. These records document legal assistance to elderly individuals under the Older Americans Act. They may include participant registration forms, service logs, information on community legal education sessions, and statistics. Disposition is as follows:

a. **Case files.**

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after verification of client's death or departure from the jurisdiction.

b. **All other records.**

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the records were created.

7.08 Medicaid Waiver Case Management Client Files. These files document counseling and other assistance by senior service providers to elderly individuals under the federal Medicaid Waiver Program. Disposition of the records is as follows:

a. **Case files, correspondence, memoranda.**

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 5 years after client's death or departure from the jurisdiction.

b. **Other records (time sheets, statements of expenditure, etc.).**

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the records were created.

7.09 Senior AIDES (Alert, Industrious, Dedicated, Energetic Service) Program Files. These records document the locality's participation in a federally-funded program for assisting qualified senior citizens to find employment. In 2004, the U.S. Department of Labor, Senior Service America authorized the destruction of senior AIDES records created prior to July 1, 1999. The disposition of Senior AIDES records is therefore as follows:

- a. **Records created prior to July 1, 1999.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Destroy.
- b. **Records created after July 1, 1999.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the records were created.

7.10 Senior Program Complaint Files. These files document complaints about long-term health care facilities and efforts by community ombudsmen to resolve such complaints.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 12 years after final disposition of the case.

7.11 Ombudsmen Quarterly Reports. These are cumulative statistical reports submitted by community ombudsmen to the state ombudsman. They contain such information as number of complaints in specific categories, agent who investigated each complaint, and number of complaints resolved or active.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the records were created.

7.12 Aging Grantee Community Profiles. These are status reports on the community submitted to senior program staff and used in the process of grant application.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year.

7.13 Aging Information Management System (AIMS) Service Logs. These records document the entry of information into the statewide network for area councils of aging maintained by the Alabama Department of Senior Services.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until entered into AIMS and verified.

Planning and Improving Community Development/Recruiting Business and Industry

8.01 Industrial Development Board Records.

- a. **Minutes, meeting agendas, and packets.** These records document the meetings of boards or authorities responsible for recruiting business and industry and planning the county's industrial development. They include agendas and packet materials (copies of budgets, work plans, reports, and other background information) reviewed by members prior to or during meetings.
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

- b. **Hearing files.** These files document citizen appeals to the industrial development board, as well as hearings and the board's decisions. Records may include correspondence with citizens, hearing notices, reports, and other material maintained in case files.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after board's decision and settlement of all appeals.

8.02 Low-Income Weatherization Assistance Program Files. These records include needs assessment surveys, dwelling condition summaries, family profiles, service description forms, labor charge summaries, invoices, reimbursement forms, and related documentation for the low-income weatherized assistance program. Applicant's names, Social Security numbers, and other personal information may also be included.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

8.03 Civic Center Lease Files. These records document the leasing of space at county civic centers or similar facilities used for business, promotional, or other community events.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 10 years after termination of the lease.

Note: For related records of routine civic center operations (accounting records, grants, bids and service contracts, personnel and training records, work orders and operations/radio logs, maintenance data on equipment and facilities), follow the disposition statements for such records in the RDA's "Administering Internal Operations" subfunctions.

8.04 Flood Insurance Rate Maps. These maps are provided to counties by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). They show insurance rates, based on the likelihood of flooding, for each piece of property located within county boundaries.

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

Zoning and Regulating Subdivisions

9.01 Planning/Zoning Board/Board of Adjustment Records.

- a. **Meeting/hearing minutes, agendas, and packets.** These records document the role of the county zoning board of board of adjustment in planning and regulating the location and development of business or residential areas within the county. They include agendas and packet materials (copies of budgets, work plans, reports, and other background information) reviewed by members prior to or during meetings.
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.
- b. **Hearing files.** These records document citizen's requests for variances to the county zoning board or board of adjustments, hearings on requests, and the board's decisions. They may include applications for variances, protest letters, hearing notices, correspondence and reports, and other materials maintained as case files.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after board's decisions and settlement of all appeals.

9.02 Subdivision Files. These files document the county's approval of contractors' plans and specifications to ensure compliance with county requirements. The records include plans, plats, maps, and specifications showing roads, rights-of-way, drainage ditches, and other surface construction or improvements. They also include statements dedicating roads to the county, copies of commission resolutions assuming responsibility for road maintenance, soil testing reports, performance bonds for contractors, inspection reports, permits, correspondence, and photographs. Disposition is as follows:

a. **Final plans, plats, maps, and photographs.**

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

b. **Other material in files (inspection reports, permits, performance bonds, correspondence).**

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 7 years (Code of Alabama 1975 § 6-5-221 through -227 [revised 2011]).

9.03 Historical Aerial Photographs and Final Maps. Views of roads, bridges, bodies of water, and other county structures and topography are recorded in photographs and maps. They may be used in planning, economic development, regulation, and other core functions of county government. This item includes both conventional photographs and maps and GIS maps and photographs that can provide long-term historical documentation of the county's physical development.

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

9.04 Master Address Files and Address Change Information. These records include geographic information – primarily street and road names and locations – on all residential and business address covered by the county GIS system. They also include additions or corrections of names, street addresses, telephone numbers, or other information on residences and businesses. Disposition is as follows:

a. **Master address files.**

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after information has been superseded.

b. **Address change information.**

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after master file has been updated and verified.

9.05 Zoning Violations Correction Files. These files document the county's efforts to identify and correct violations of its zoning ordinances, as well as ordinances regulating weeds, littering, and other public nuisances. Case files or similar records may include notices of violations, complaints from citizens, and other correspondence; photographs of property, and records of court proceedings. Disposition is as follows:

a. **Records of violations that result in litigation.**

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after litigation is concluded.

b. **Records of violations that do not result in litigation.**

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after violation is corrected.

Licensing/Permitting and Inspecting

10.01 Records Documenting Business and Occupational (Privilege) Licensing. These records document the issuing of business and privilege licenses and permits as means of regulating such activities within its boundaries and collecting revenue. The Code of Alabama 1975 § 6-2-35 sets a five-year statute of limitations on the collection of such fees.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

Records Management Recommendations: It is recommended that returned checks or other records documenting the county's efforts to collect unpaid fees or services charges be retained 5 years or until settlement of all claims due. The Code of Alabama 1975 § 6-2-35 sets 5 years as the statute of limitations for collecting "amounts claimed for licenses, franchise taxes, or other taxes."

10.02 Alabama Alcoholic Beverage Control Board Liquor Licenses. These records document the county's submission to the ABC Board of a vendor's letter requesting approval of a liquor license. A copy of the application for the license is attached. License applications are approved by the commission and documented in its minutes prior to sending them to the ABC board.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

10.03 Utility Permit Files. These records document the proper placement of utility lines, poles, and ditches on county rights-of-way. Information available includes plans and diagrams of line or pole locations in rights-of-way, names of the utility contractors, and related correspondence, maps or drawings, and permits.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain at least 7 years, or until superseded, obsolete, or no longer useful.

10.04 Commercial and Residential Building Plans, Permits, and Permit Logs. These records document the county's issuing and tracking of commercial building permits, plans, and drawings. Information available may include the building's location, owner's name, contractor's name, and permit number. Disposition is as follows:

a. **Original commercial building plans.**

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 7 years. Offer to a local public library, archives, or other historical repository prior to destruction.

b. **All other records (residential plans; commercial and residential permits and permit logs; contractors' certificates of insurance).**

Disposition: Retain 7 years Temporary Record. (Code of Alabama 1975 § 6-5-221 through -227 [revised 2011]).

- c. **Abandoned projects.** These records include documents, plans, and drawings that are submitted for permitting but apply to abandoned projects. They may include permitting information and notes recorded by the county's plan review staff.

Disposition: Temporary record. Retain 1 year after last action or contact with vendor.

10.05 Citizenship/Legal Immigration Status Verification Records. These records document enforcement of Section 30 of Alabama Act 2011-535, commonly known as the Immigration Act. They consist of copies of specified types of identifying documents (e.g., valid driver's license, birth certificates, naturalization documents) that verify the U.S. citizenship, or legal immigration status, of persons applying for or renewing business license. Disposition also covers any forms created by an agency to facilitate enforcement of the act.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

Note: Return original verification documents to the license applicant.

10.06 Structural Condemnation Files. These records document the government's determination that buildings within their respective jurisdictions are not structurally sound. Records produced may include, but are not limited to, citizen complaints, inspection forms and notes, and documentation of building destruction.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 5 years after destruction of the building.

Vaccinating and Controlling Domestic Animals

11.01 Animal Control Operations Files (Rabies Immunization Certificates; Reports of Operations; Lists of Animals Impounded, Claimed, Adopted, or Executed). These records document general operations of the county animal control department, including licensing and vaccinating pet animals and retrieving, housing, and executing strays.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years (Code of Alabama 1975 § 3-7A-2).

Note: For routine control operations records (accounting and purchasing records; service contracts; personnel and training records; work orders; operations logs, telephone / radio logs; maintenance data on equipment and facilities; correspondence with pet owners or complaining citizens), follow the disposition statements for such records in the "Administering Internal Operations" subfunctions.

Managing Emergencies

12.01 Minutes, Agendas, and Packets of the Local Emergency Planning Committee and/or Emergency Management Oversight Board. These records document proceedings of the committee responsible for oversight and advice on emergency management functions within the county. They may include minutes, agendas, and packet materials; staff reports; correspondence with local, state, and federal agencies; and related documentation.

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

12.02 Staff and Planning Meeting Minutes, Notes, and Packets. The agency may hold regular or periodic meetings with staff and other agencies, stakeholders, and partners to plan operations or review events. These records may include notes of meetings and informational materials reviewed by staff.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for useful life.

12.03 County Emergency Operations Plans, Procedures, and Guidelines. These records consist of comprehensive emergency management plans, emergency operations plans, continuity of operations (COOP) plans, and standard operating procedures (SOP's) and guidelines (SOG's) created by each county EMA. They establish a framework for ensuring that the county is adequately prepared to deal with various categories of emergencies.

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

12.04 Emergency and Disaster Incident Records. These records document planning and response activities taken during and after emergencies that occur within the county EMA's jurisdiction. They may include action plans, photographs, incident reports, damage reports, response reports, weather event files, correspondence, and relate records, exclusive of those covered in Disaster Public Assistance Files.

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

12.05 Disaster Public Assistance Files. This series documents the application and disbursement of federal assistance to communities within the county EMA's jurisdiction. Typical records include applications for assistance, briefing materials, project worksheets, correspondence, documentation of funds disbursed, and monthly claims for reimbursement of expenses.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after federal audit is conducted.

12.06 Emergency Exercise and Training Records. These records document the performance of federally mandated emergency training exercises for assessment by the state EMA, as well as participation in live or online training courses. Included may be exercise scenarios and sequences of events, training schedule calendars and course announcements, lists of events, training schedules calendars and course announcements, lists of participants or attendee rosters, evaluations and critiques, and quarterly reports on training and exercise activities submitted to the state EMA.

a. **Quarterly training and exercising reports submitted to the state EMA.**

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after submission to the AEMA.

b. **All other records.**

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for useful life.

12.07 Public Education Program Records. These records related to the design and implementation of emergency management educational and outreach programs presented by the county EMA. They may include planning documentation, program descriptions, instructional materials, course outlines, enrollment and attendance records, presentations, audio and video materials, and course evaluations.

- a. **Planning documentation (policies, procedures, standards, and publications).**

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

- b. **All other records.**

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for useful life.

12.08 Hazardous Materials Incident Reports. These records detail all responses to hazardous materials incidents. The report contains the date and type of incident, the name and address of the party involved, and the incident's disposition (such as the recovery costs involved).
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

12.09 Tier II Reports. These records are reports filed by companies and businesses subject to SARA Title II (Community Right to Know Act) detailing chemicals (hazardous material) stored in their facilities.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after replacement by current Tier II report.

12.10 EMA Volunteers Files. These records document the use of volunteers by the county EMA. They may include selection criteria, application forms, credentialing information, and files on individual volunteers.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after separation of volunteer.

Constructing County Buildings and Managing Office Space

13.01 County Building Construction and Renovation Files. These files document the design, construction, repair, and renovation of courthouses and other county-owned buildings. Included may be building specifications and floor plans, plans of proposed work, lists of materials, correspondence, memoranda, reports, blueprints, site plans, elevation details, and financial records. Disposition is as follows:

- a. **Plans, specifications, and blueprints for courthouses and other county buildings of significant historical interest (e.g., county archives).**

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

Records Management Recommendation: Retain in office for life of building; then offer for transfer to a local library, archives, or historical society under the terms of a local government records deposit agreement.

- b. **All other records (financial records; plans, specifications, and blueprints for buildings lacking significant historical interest).**

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for life of building.

13.02 Construction Project Contract Files. These files provide secondary documentation of contract activities relating to the building and furnishing of county government buildings. They include such information as the name of the vendor/contractor, terms of the contract, records of payment, and performance bonds.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 10 years after expiration of the contract.

13.03 Space Management Plans/Records of Space Assignments. These records document the assignment of office space in county buildings and facilities and include operating plans for the assignment of such space.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years after the audit period in which the records were superseded.

Administering Internal Operations: Managing the Agency

14.01 Administrative Policies and Procedures. These records include materials not created by the county commission on a variety of issues regarding its relations with the public, other governmental or private entities, and county employees.

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

14.02 Administrative Reference Files. These records include materials not created by the county commission; they are collected and used only as reference sources of information.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for useful life.

14.03 Annual Reports. County commissions may create annual narrative and/or financial reports describing their activities during the calendar or fiscal year. Such reports provide summary documentation of commission functions, projects, and activities, as well as an ongoing history of the county and its government.

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

14.04 Meeting Notices. These records are official notifications of the time and place of regular and special commission meetings.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

14.05 Historical and Publicity Files. These records include news releases, newsletters, brochures, periodicals, photographs, videotapes, audiotapes, speeches, and public service announcements.

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD. Retain in office or transfer to a local library, archives, or historical society under the terms of a local government records deposit agreement.

14.06 Websites and Social Media Sites. Counties develop websites and social media sites for responding to public inquiries and providing information on county government affairs. Material on the site may include: information on county's location; population; demography; organization and officials; economic, cultural, and educational resources; transitory information on county events; and other information describing the local "way of life".

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD. Preserve a complete copy of the website annually, or as often as significant changes are made.

14.07 Official Bonds and Oaths. These records comprise official bonds and oaths required of commission members and other county personnel under Code of Alabama 1975 § 11-2-1. They include oaths of office, power of attorney statements, insurance policies, and other surety bonds. Original bonds and oaths are filed at the county probate office.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years after the audit period in which the term in office ended.

14.08 Routine Correspondence. This type of correspondence documents the daily conduct of county government affairs in the commission's relations with local citizens and businesses, other governmental agencies, and the general public. It relates to everyday matters (such as answering inquiries, providing information, or performing mandated services) rather than to policy development or issues of long-term administrative impact.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years.

14.09 Legal Case Files. These records document lawsuits filed by or against the county government.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after the case is closed.

14.10 Complaint Files/Unlitigated Claims for Damages. These records document damage claims against the county that are resolved without litigation.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years after settlement or denial of complaint or claim.

14.11 Mailing Lists. These records include various standard lists of names and addresses used by commission and other county personnel.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for useful life.

14.12 Mail, Telephone, and Fax Machine Logs. These records are lists of telephone and fax machine contacts and related data.

Disposition: Temporary record. Retain for useful life.

14.13 Calendars. These records include desk calendars and other scheduling devices for county personnel.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year.

14.14 Records Management Documentation.

- a. **Records documenting implementation of the commission's approved RDA.** These records include records management plans, records inventories, finding aids, and destruction notices.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

- b. **Copy of approved RDA.** The RDA provides legal guidelines for the disposition of all agency records. The county commission should maintain a signed copy of its RDA.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years after the audit period in which the RDA was superseded.

- c. **Local government records deposit agreements.** These records are formal agreements executed by the county commission so that a local records repository (library, archives, or historical society) may accept physical custody of long-term records. They include inventories of records in the repository.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 10 years after termination of the agreement.

Note: Deposit agreements must be approved by the Local Government Records Commission. For information, contact the ADAH.

- d. **Records request forms.** County agencies may ask visitors who wish to examine records to complete an identification form before providing access. Information in such forms may include visitor's name and contact information, date and time of request, records requested, reason for request, and staff comments.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit or until any resulting litigation is concluded.

14.15 Computer Systems Documentation. These files include hardware and software manuals and diskettes, warranties, records of access/authorities, file naming conventions.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain former system documentation 2 years after audit in the year the former hardware and software no longer exist anywhere in the agency and all permanent records have been migrated to the new system.

14.16 Geographic Information System (GIS) Records. These records consist of geospatial data that describes particular locations, areas, or geographic features within the county. GIS systems may be used for a variety of purposes, such as planning and zoning, construction projects, or emergency response. Although records may be continually updated the system itself is maintained as a perpetual data file.

- a. **Datasets (e.g.: base datasets, such as ground and water features, used to compile other layers of primary focus: datasets of buildings, structures, and businesses; census datasets; communication or emergency dispatch datasets, etc.; datasets for output documents, such as maps and aerial photographs).**

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until superseded.

Note: Output documents (such as maps and aerial photographs) may have separate dispositions in other sections of this RDA.

- b. **GIS system and metadata documentation.** These files include hardware and software manuals, metadata lists, and warranties.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain former system documentation 2 years after the audit period in which the former hardware, software, or datasets no longer exists anywhere in the agency and all permanent records have been migrated to the new system.
- c. **Historical snapshots.** These records are annual snapshots of the entire GIS system.
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD. Preserve a complete copy of the system annually, or as often as significant changes are made to layers or datasets.

14.17 Sign-In Logs.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year.

Administering Internal Operations: Managing Finances

15.01 Budgeting Records. These records document preparing a budget request package and reporting the status of funds, requesting amendments of allotments, and reporting program performance.

- a. **Budget estimates and requests.** These records contain information submitted by county departments, nonprofit organizations, and/or other entities during budget preparation.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.
- b. **Approved annual budgets.** These records are the final county budgets approved by the county commission.
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD. If a copy of the budget is included with the commission minutes, retain additional copies for useful life.

15.02 Audit Reports, Examiners of Public Accounts. These records document the county's overall financial condition, and the findings of the Examiners of Public Accounts, during each audit period.

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

15.03 Accounting Records.

- a. **Routine accounting records.** These are records of original entry or other routine accounting transactions, including journals, registers, ledgers, bank statements, deposit slips, canceled checks, etc.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

Note: Disposition for grant-related accounting records is provided under RDA item 15.08.

Records Management Recommendation: It is recommended that returned checks, or other records documenting the county's efforts to collect unpaid fees or service charges, be retained for 5 years or until settlement of all claims due. The Code of Alabama 1975 § 6-2-35 sets 5 years as the statute of limitations for collecting "amounts due for licenses, franchise taxes, or other taxes."

- b. **General ledgers and detailed year-end trial balances.** These are records of final entry for all financial transactions: collecting revenue (taxing and licensing), purchasing, investing, administering state and federal funds, and general accounting.
 - i. Records created prior to 1975.
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

- ii. Records created in or after 1975.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 10 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the record was created.

- c. **Minutes of claims allowed or denied.** These minutes are records of final entry documenting all claims against the county and actions taken in regard to them. They include information on claimants, amounts of claims, claims allowed or denied, dates of decisions, and amounts of final payments.
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

15.04 Purchasing Records. These records document the requisitioning and purchasing of supplies and equipment, receipting and invoicing for goods and services, and authorizing payment for products. Records in this series may include, but are not limited to, purchase orders, quotes, invoices, purchasing card receipts, and receiving reports.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

15.05 Contracts, Leases, Franchises, and Agreements. These records document the negotiation, fulfillment, and termination of all contracts, leases, franchises, and agreements entered into by the county, including final contracts that are subject to the bid process.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 10 years after expiration of the contract (Code of Alabama 1975 § 6-2-33).

15.06 Records of Formal Bids. These records document the bid process, including the county's requests for proposals and unsuccessful responses from service vendors.

- a. **Records documenting bids on products or services obtained by the county commission.** These records include requests for bid proposals, successful and unsuccessful bids by product or service vendors, and related correspondence.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 7 years after the date bids were opened (Code of Alabama 1975 § 41-16-54e).
- b. **Lists of eligible bidders.** County commissions may compile lists of persons or businesses who have filed requests to be notified of bids on projects, products, or services rendered.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after last contact with listed vendors.

Note: Requests from bidders to be included on the lists may be treated as Routine Correspondence.

- c. **Correspondence with vendors slated for removal from the lists of eligible bidders.** Under the Code of Alabama § 41-16-4(a), any listed bidder who fails to respond after receiving three solicitations for bids may be stricken from the eligible list. This correspondence documents the county's commission's efforts to warn unresponsive vendors that they will be dropped from the lists unless they ask to remain eligible. It includes forms or letters sent out by the office and any responses from vendors. Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years after the audit period in which the bidder is removed from the lists.

15.07 Vendor Verifications of Employees' Legal Immigration Status. These records document enforcement of Section 9 of Alabama Act 2011-535, commonly known as the Immigration Act. They consist of affidavits and/or E-Verify Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) stipulating that active or prospective vendors do not knowingly employ illegal immigrants.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after last contract with vendor.

15.08 Grant Project Files. These records document the county's application for and conduct of grant projects funded by local, state, federal, or private sources. Disposition is as follows:

- a. **Financial records, interim narrative reports, and correspondence.** These records include financial reports, interim narrative reports, background materials, and other non-financial supporting documentation for grants awarded. Also included are records relating to unsuccessful grant applications. Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after submission of final financial report or denial of application.
- b. **Subsidiary financial records.** These records include accounting or purchasing records and any other subsidiary financial documentation of federal grants, excluding financial reports. (See federal Rule 1354.) Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after submission of final financial report.
- c. **Final narrative reports.** Final narrative reports are submitted according to the requirements of the funding agency. They summarize the goals of the grant, how the money was used, and what was accomplished. Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

15.09 Records Documenting County Funding of Non-Profit Agencies. These records document funds awarded by county governments to nonprofit agencies within their corporate limits. They may include:

- a. **Resolutions or other directives establishing program requirements, policies, and guidelines.** Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.
- b. **Guidelines and application forms for each funding cycle.** Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

c. **Applications for funding.**

- i. Unsuccessful applications.
Disposition: Temporary Record. retain 3 years.
- ii. Successful applications.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain in agency's project file.

d. **Contracts with funded agencies.**

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 10 years.

e. **Project files of funded agencies.**

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

Note: for non-profit agencies that receive ongoing funding, counties may wish to retain project files from earlier funding cycles.

f. **Interim implementation reports by funded agencies, final financial reports and documentation, and correspondence (including correspondence with unfunded applicants).**

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

g. **Final narrative reports funded agencies.**

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

15.10 Investment Reports. These records provide summary documentation of the county's financial investments.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

15.11 Travel Records. These records document requests by county personnel for authorization to travel on official business, and related materials such as travel reimbursement, forms and itineraries.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

15.12 Employer Tax Returns and Related Files. These records include, but are not limited to, employer state tax returns, federal tax returns, local tax returns, unemployment quarterly reports, and Federal Forms 1099. These records do not pertain to individual employees but instead describe the local government agency as a whole.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

Administering Internal Operations: Managing Human Resources

16.01 Personnel Board Meeting/Hearing Minutes, Agendas, and Packets. These records document meetings and hearings of the county personnel board, along with the agenda of topics to be discussed at the meeting and any attachments or other documents provided to board members.

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

16.02 Personnel Hearing Files. These records document various types of hearings held by the county personnel board, such as demotion hearings, hardship rules hearings, grievance hearings, dismissal appeals, discrimination appeals, layoff appeals, and citizen complaints.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after board's decisions and settlement of all appeals.

16.03 Employee Handbooks. These records provide guidance to new employees about personnel rules and other policies and procedures.

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

16.04 Employee Newsletters. Internal newsletters are created for county government employees to communicate personnel policies, news of important events, and information on individual employees.

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

16.05 Job Classification and Pay Plans. These records document job classifications for all positions covered by the county personnel system. They include the title, qualifications, duties, and pay range for each county government commission.

- a. **Master copies of job classifications and pay plans.** These copies are usually maintained by the county commission or the county personnel department.

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

- b. **Copies held by other county government departments.**

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 4 years after position is reclassified.

- c. **Job reclassification surveys, correspondence, and related materials.**

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 4 years after position is reclassified.

16.06 Examination Records. These records document the development of and administration of examination for employment in county positions.

- a. **Examination history files.** These files document the development of employment examinations. They include questionnaires, comparison studies, final copies of examinations, and job announcements.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after examination is no longer in use.

- b. **Examination administrative files.** These records document the administration of examinations to applicants for county positions. They include rating forms, answer sheets, and lists of applicants.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years.
- c. **Typing tests.** These records document typing tests given to potential job applicants before accepting their applications for employment. They may include printouts showing the tests taken, with errors; summaries of results; demonstration forms used by the staff; and sign-in sheets.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year.

16.07 Certification Records. These records document the process of certifying applicants for employment. They pertain to individuals deemed qualified for county positions after submitting an application and taking an employment examination.

- a. **Employment registers.** These records are lists of individuals declared qualified for certain county positions. They include job classifications, names of eligible applicants, and their ranking on the certification list.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after superseded.
- b. **Employee certification files.** These records document the certification process with individual job applicants. They include questionnaires, training and experience records, grades, notifications, and returned postcards and letters.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years.

16.08 Job Recruitment Materials. These records document efforts by the county commission to advertise positions and attract qualified personnel.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years after the position is filled.

16.09 Employment Applications. These are applications by individuals for employment in county positions.

- a. **Successful applications.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain in employee personnel file.
- b. **Unsuccessful applications.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years.
- c. **Supplemental data forms.** Information on these forms includes the job applicant's name, Social Security number, date of birth, race, gender, and recruitment source. The form may be separated and filed separately from other information on the employment application.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after employee separation or 3 years after an unsuccessful application.

- d. **I-9 forms.** These federal forms are used to verify that persons seeking employment are eligible to work in the United States. Disposition of the employing agency's copy is provided by 8 CFR 274a.2.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after employment or 1 year after termination, whichever is longer.

16.10 Equal Employment Opportunity Commission Files. These records document the county's compliance with hiring regulations established by the federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years.

Note: "Whenever a charge of discrimination has been filed, or an action brought by the Attorney General – [retain] until final disposition of the charge or action" (29 CFR 1602.31, 1602.20).

16.11 Employee Personnel Files. These records document each county employee's work history; they are generally maintained as case files. A file may include information on an employee's training, performance evaluations, disciplinary actions, promotions and demotions, awards, leave, and salary.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after separation of employee.

16.12 Employee Work Schedules. These records document the daily and weekly work schedules of all county employees.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

16.13 Annual Reports of Promotions and New Hires. These records summarize overall county personnel activity and turnover during the year. They may also include reports of employee retirements, resignations, and terminations.

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

16.14 Leave and Attendance Records. These records document the attendance and leave status of county personnel, both generally and for individual employees.

- a. **Individual employee leave and attendance records (including time sheets).** These are records documenting hours worked, leave earned, and leave taken by individual county employees.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

- b. **Employee cumulative leave/attendance records.** These records document the final leave status (cumulative leave) of individual county employees.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after separation of employee.

- c. **Employee sick leave donation records.** These records document the donation of sick leave to their colleagues by county employees.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

16.15 Payroll Records. These records document county payrolls, as well as pay status and payroll deductions for individual employees.

- a. **Annual payroll earnings reports/records documenting payroll deductions for tax purposes.** These are summaries of employees' earnings during a fiscal year, including all deductions and federal Form 941.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 50 years after the end of the tax year in which the records were created.
- b. **Records documenting county payrolls.** These records include pre-payroll reports, payroll check registers, payroll action forms, payroll/overtime certification reports, etc.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.
- c. **Records documenting payroll deduction authorizations.** These records document payroll deduction authorizations for taxes (including W-4 forms), retirement and insurance contributions, and all other deductions withheld from the pay of individual employees.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.
- d. **Records documenting payroll deductions.** These records document taxes (including W-2 forms), retirement contributions, and all other deductions withheld from the pay of individual employees.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.
- e. **Employee "Cafeteria Plan" (Flexible Benefits) Records.** These records document salary-reduction type plans authorized by the U.S. Internal Revenue Service, Section 125.
 - i. General information about the plan.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until superseded.
 - ii. Employee applications, correspondence, enrollment cards and files.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after termination of the plan.

16.16 Employee Insurance Program Enrollment and Claims Files. These files document the county's efforts to assist employees and their dependents to enroll in health/life insurance programs, in accordance with guidelines established by the county commission.

- a. **General information on the program.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until superseded.
- b. **Employee applications, correspondence, and enrollment cards and files.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 4 years after program termination or employee separation.

c. **Employee claims and files.**

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years after the audit period in which the claim was filed.

16.17 Workmen's Compensation Insurance Claim files. These files document all claims pertaining to work-related injuries or diseases made by county employees.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 12 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the transaction occurred.

16.18 Unemployment Compensation Files. These files provide documentation related to employee claims for unemployment compensation.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years after the audit period on which the transaction occurred.

16.19 Employment Assistance Program Files. These are administrative records documenting the referral of employees to various assistance programs and subsequent services provided.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years after the audit period in which the transaction occurred.

16.20 Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) Records. These records document administration of the Family Medical Leave program, including leave taken, premium payments, employer notices, and correspondence.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

16.21 Affordable Care Act Compliance Files. These records encompass the documentation submitted to the federal government to demonstrate compliance with the Affordable Care Act.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after submission.

16.22 Training Records. These records document the county's provision of in-service training and professional development for its employees. They do not include materials obtained from outside sources. Disposition is as follows:

- a. **Training standards, policies, procedures and publications.** These records document the county's overall standards, policies, and procedures in providing specialized training to its employees. They may include general policy statements or guidelines, training manuals, or related publications.

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

Note: Permanent retention applies to the file copy. Duplicates may be destroyed when no longer needed.

- b. **Training administrative files.** These records document the process of conducting training for employees. They may include individual lesson plans, audiovisual presentations or materials, lists of attendees at workshops or training sessions, sign-in sheets, unpublished handouts, and appraisals of training completed by participants.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for useful life.

16.23 “Drug-Free Workplace” Records. These records document the county’s substance abuse policies and programs, as well as drug and alcohol testing of county employees. Under the federal Americans with Disabilities Act, such medical related records may not be included in Employee Personnel Files.

Retention periods are as follows:

- a. **Drug/Alcohol abuse policy and procedures documentation.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 4 years after policy is superseded.
- b. **Positive employee drug or alcohol test results, documentation of employee refusals to take tests, documentation of employee referrals and treatment in substance abuse programs, copies of county’s annual MIS reports submitted to FTA.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 5 years.
- c. **Records related to the collection process and employee training.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years.
- d. **Negative employee drug or alcohol test results.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year.

Administering Internal Operations: Managing Properties, Facilities, and Resources

17.01 Annual Inventory Records. These records document all personal property, equipment, or capital outlay by the county commission on an annual basis.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

17.02 Receipts of Responsibility for Property. These records document the temporary use or possession of county property by county employees.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until return of item to property manager.

17.03 Deeds to County Property. These are copies of records that document the county’s ownership of real property. Deeds are held permanently by the county probate office.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until property is sold. Verify that the probate office holds the original deed prior to destruction.

17.04 Rental Agreements and Related Records. These records are produced when the county government rents the usage of publicly owned real estate and/or facilities to other entities including, but not limited to, nonprofit organizations and businesses. Records in this series may include rental agreements governing the usage of public facilities, annual insurance verifications submitted to local governments, and other related files.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years after the agreement expires.

17.05 Insurance Policies and Claims.

- a. **Insurance policies.** These policies document all insurance policies carried by the agency.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 10 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the policy was terminated.
- b. **Insurance claims.** These records document insurance claims filed by the local government agency.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years after the audit period in which the claim was settled.
- c. **Certificates of liability.** These records provide proof of insurance. Certificates are typically valid for a period of one year or less.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until superseded.

17.06 Facilities/Building Maintenance Work Orders. These records document routine maintenance activities in county buildings or other facilities.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year.

17.07 Facilities/Building Inspection Records. These records document the routine safety and maintenance inspection of county buildings, facilities, and such potentially dangerous items as furnaces, elevators, electronic doors, etc.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 5 years.

17.08 Facilities/Buildings Security Records. These records document the county's efforts to provide security to members of the public using its buildings and facilities, as well as to monitor the admission of staff and visitors to these areas. They may include visitors' logs or sign-in sheets, staff swipe card logs, alarm system logs, recordings of security monitoring or response, and any other records documenting security staff's response to alarms or emergencies.

- a. **Security monitoring or response recordings.**
 - i. Recorded information that does not become part of a case file.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 months.
 - ii. Recorded information that becomes part of a case file.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until final disposition of all cases for which recording provides evidence.
- b. **All other records.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years.

17.09 Facilities/Buildings Safety Plans and Training Files.

- a. **Safety plans.** These records document the manner in which agency staff are directed to respond in emergencies. Examples of safety plans include, but are not limited to, fire evacuation protocols, severe weather plans, and active shooter protocols.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until superseded.
- b. **Training files.** These records document the training and practice undertaken by staff to implement safety plans. Examples of training and practice include, but are not limited to, fire drills, tornado drills, and bomb threat drills.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years.

17.10 Motor Pool Use Records. These records document the use of vehicles in the county motor pool by county employees.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

17.11 Parking Records. These records document the use of county parking facilities by employees or visitors. They may include parking permits, cards, and applications for these items.

- a. **When parking fee is charged.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.
- b. **When no parking fee is charged.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after permit expires.

17.12 Vehicle and Equipment Ownership and Maintenance Files. These records document the ownership and maintenance of all vehicles and other equipment owned or maintained by the county. They may include titles, bills of sale, repair records, and related correspondence.

- a. **Ownership records (titles, bills of sale, etc.).**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following the audit period in which the equipment or vehicle is removed from inventory.
- b. **Maintenance files (work orders, repair records, and related financial records).**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

17.13 Long-Distance Telephone Logs. These records document use of the county's long-distance telephone systems by county employees during business hours.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

Requirement and Recommendations for Implementing the Records Disposition Authority (RDA)

Requirement

Under the Code of Alabama 1975 § 41-13-23, “no county, municipal, or other local government official, shall cause any. . . record to be destroyed or otherwise disposed of without first obtaining the approval of the local government records commission.” This RDA constitutes authorization by the Local Government Records Commission to dispose of records as stipulated, with the condition that the responsible official must submit a Local Government Records Destruction Notice to the ADAH Government Records Division to document the destruction. The ADAH, which serves as the commission’s staff, retains local records destruction documentation as a permanent record.

Recommendations

In addition, the Agency should make every effort to establish and maintain a quality record-keeping program by conducting the following activities:

The Agency should designate a staff member in a managerial position as its records liaison/records manager, who is responsible for: ensuring the development of quality record keeping systems that meet the business and legal needs of the agency, coordinating the transfer and destruction of records, ensuring that permanent records held on alternative storage media (such as microforms and digital imaging systems) are maintained in compliance with national and state standards, and ensuring the regular implementation of the agency’s approved RDA.

Permanent records in the Agency’s custody should be maintained under proper intellectual control and in an environment that will ensure their physical order and preservation.

Destruction of temporary records, as authorized in this RDA, should occur agency-wide on a regular basis – for example, after the successful completion of an audit, at the end of an administration, or at the end of a fiscal year. Despite the RDA’s provisions, no record should be destroyed that is necessary to comply with requirements of the Open Meetings Act, audit requirements, or any legal notice or subpoena.

The agency should maintain full documentation of any computerized record-keeping system it employs. It should develop procedures for: (1) backing up all permanent records held in electronic format; (2) storing a back-up copy off-site; and (3) migrating all permanent records when the system is upgraded or replaced. If the agency chooses to maintain permanent records solely in electronic format, it is committed to funding any system upgrades and migration strategies necessary to ensure the records’ permanent preservation and accessibility.

Electronic mail contains permanent, temporary, or transitory record information. Although e-mail records can be printed out, filed, and retained according to the RDA’s requirements, the office should preferably employ an electronic records management system capable of sorting e-

mail into folders and archiving messages having long-term value.

The staff of the Local Government Records Commission or the Examiners of Public Accounts may examine the condition of the permanent records maintained in the custody of the Agency and inspect records destruction documentation. Agency records managers and/or the ADAH archivists are available to instruct the staff in RDA implementation and otherwise assist the Agency in implementing its records management program.

The Local Government Records Commission adopted this records disposition authority on October 28, 2020.

Steve Murray, Chairman
Local Government Records Commission

Date

By signing below, the agency acknowledges receipt of the retention periods and requirements established by the records disposition authority.

Chairperson
County Commission

Date

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